

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 03745 182318Z

61

ACTION EUR-12

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SUBJ US RESTRICTIONS ON IMPORTS OF MEAT FROM CANADA

1. MONTREAL AND TORONTO MONDAY (NOVEMBER 18) MORNING
NEWSPAPERS CARRIED 4 & 6 COLUMN HEADLINES OVER FIRST
PAGE ARTICLES ON U.S. MEAT IMPORT QUOTAS.

2. THE MONTREAL GAZETTE HEADLINED "U.S. SETS TOUGH
QUOTAS ON CANADIAN MEAT EXPORTS" AND SUMMARIZED CANADIAN
REACTIONS AS "(1) FORD IS USING A HAMMER AT CANADA -
BOYD ANERRSON, FIRST VICE PRESIDENT, CANADIAN CATTLEMENS
ASSOCIATION; (2) IT WOULD BE A DISASTER FOR CANADA TO
GIVE IN TO U.S. DEMANDS -WILLIAM MILLER, VICE PRESIDENT,
NATIONAL FARMERS UNION; (3) NO COMMENT - S.B. WILLIAMS,
DEPUTY FEDERAL AGRICULTURE MINISTER, WAITING FOR HIS BOSS
EUGENE WHELAN, TO RETURN FROM ROME". OTHER WESTERN
PROVINCE SPOKESMEN CITED WERE CRITICAL OF THE U.S. ACTION,
SUPPORTED CANADA'S EARLIER ACTIONS AND ADDED THAT
THE EFFECT ON THE CANADIAN CATTLE INDUSTRY WOULD
BE SMALL BUT THE MAIN IMPACT WOULD BE ON PORT
PRODUCERS. THE GAZETTE ARTICLE REFERRED TO CANADA'S
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PAGE 02 OTTAWA 03745 182318Z

QUOTAS BEING BASED ON FIVE YEARS WHILE U.S. QUOTAS

WERE NOT SO CALCULATED, CITING CANADIAN CATTLE EXPORTS AS AVERAGING 200,000 HEAD ANNUALLY OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS AGAINST A QUOTA OF 17,000 HEAD. THE GAZETTE REPORTED THE INTENT OF U.S. ACTION WAS TO FORCE REMOVAL OF CANADIAN QUOTAS AND QUOTED ALBERTA AGRICULTURE MINISTER AS SAYING U.S. ACTIONS PUNITIVE.

3. TORONTO'S GLOBE AND MAIL CARRIED TWO FRONT PAGE ARTICLE HEADLINED: "PRETTY DAMN PETTY - CANADIAN PRODUCERS ARE ANGRY OVER U.S. BEEF PORK CONTROLS" AND "FORD RETALIATES, LAYS DOWN QUOTAS ON IMPORTS OF CANADIAN CATTLE, HOGS". THE ARTICLES STATED U.S. QUOTAS REPRESENTED ESTIMATED ONE-THIRD OF WHAT CANADA'S ANNUAL EXPORTS HAD BEEN. IT WAS OPINED THAT THE FIRST EFFECT WOULD BE ON EXPORTERS OF LOW GRADE BEEF TRADITIONALLY SOLD TO U.S. PROCESSORS OF CANNED MEAT PRODUCTS. THE ARTICLES CITED CANADIAN OFFICIAL POSITION THAT PROBLEM TRACES BACK TO U.S. PRICE FREEZES IN MARCH 1973 BUT ALSO INCLUDED U.S. POSITION THAT PROBLEM DATES BACK TO THE APRIL, 1972 CANADIAN CHANGES IN BEEF GRADING.

4. QUOTING AN UNIDENTIFIED CANADIAN OFFICIAL, THE GLOBE AND MAIL SAID: "IN THE LONG RUN HOWEVER, CANADIAN PRODUCERS HAVE BENEFITED FROM UNRESTRICTED ACCESS TO THE U.S. MARKET SINCE CANADA HAS BEEN A NET EXPORTER OF CATTLE, SWINE AND DRESSED PRODUCTS. 'CANADA'S LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY WAS BUILT OVER THE YEARS ON THE BASIS THAT, WHEN THERE WAS A SUPPLY OF BEEF AND PORK SURPLUS TO DOMESTIC NEEDS, THERE HAS BEEN UNCLE SAM TO TAKE THE SURPLUS'. THE OFFICIAL CAUTIONED THAT THE U.S. MOVE WAS NOT JUST A REACTION TO CANADIAN BEEF IMPORT RESTRICTIONS BUT REFLECTED STATE DEPARTMENT DISSATISFACTION WITH CANADIAN IMPORT RESTRICTIONS ON OTHER AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS, SUCH AS EGGS AND TURKEYS. 'THIS HAS BEEN BUILDING UP FOR MORE THAN A YEAR. THEY'VE HAD IT UP TO THEIR EARS AS FAR AS THEY ARE CONCERNED. YOU DON'T PLAY WITH THE BORDER LIKE A YO-YO IF YOU WANT TO KEEP GOOD TRADE RELATIONS. THIS IS TOUGH STUFF AND HAS STRONG LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS. THE AVERAGE

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 OTTAWA 03745 182318Z

CITIZEN OF CANADA DOESN'T REALIZE THAT CANADIAN-U.S. RELATIONS ARE IN BAD SHAPE AND WE ARE PARTLY TO BLAME FOR THAT".

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